

NAVAL MEDIA AWARD WINNER

# The Insider

MAY 2016

**CAPT BUZZ  
DONNELLY**

**NAVY  
TATTOOS**

**NEW PFA  
STANDARDS**

# ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH



## USS RONALD REAGAN

**Commanding Officer**

Capt. Buzz Donnelly

**Executive Officer**

Capt. Brett Crozier

**Command Master Chief**

CMDCM Jason Haka

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# CAPT Michael “Buzz” Donnelly

Captain Michael “Buzz” Donnelly is a native of Kent Island, Maryland and a 1989 graduate of Villanova University, where he was commissioned via the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC). He also attended the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

A naval flight officer, Donnelly deployed with both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets, flying the F-14 with Fighter Squadron THREE THREE (VF-33) “Starfighters,” VF-103 “Sluggers,” and VF-31 “Tomcatters.” Flying the F/A-18F he served as executive and then commanding officer of Strike Fighter Squadron ONE FIVE FOUR (VFA-154) “Black Knights.” He served as executive officer of USS NIMITZ (CVN 68) and as the last commanding officer of USS DENVER (LPD 9).

Ashore, Donnelly served two Fleet Replacement Squadron tours as an F-14 instructor with VF-101 “Grim Reapers” and as executive officer of VFA-122 “Flying Eagles.” Additionally, he served on the International Military Staff at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, Belgium and two tours in the Air Warfare Directorate (N88/N98), OPNAV Staff, Pentagon as Naval Aviation’s F/A-18 Requirements Officer and the second as Aircraft Carrier Requirements Branch Head.

Captain Donnelly has over 3000 flight hours and over 990 carrier landings in the F-14A, B and D, and F/A-18F.





# Q & A

WITH THE

# CO

CAPT MICHAEL "BUZZ" DONNELLY



**MC2 Adrienne Powers:** *Where did the 'Buzz' in Captain Michael "Buzz" Donnelly come from?*

**Commanding Officer, Captain Buzz Donnelly:** A bad haircut. As an aviator, I wish there was something more interesting but then again my career might not have had this longevity if the story was too exciting. I have been called "Buzz" since I went off to college at Villanova University in 1985. "Buzz" quickly caught on amongst my friends having a common name like Michael. I'm now known as "Buzz" to everyone except my mother.

**MC2:** *What does it mean to you to be Reagan's Commanding Officer (CO)?*

**CO:** Holding the position of commanding officer is a tremendous honor and very weighty responsibility. The trust put into the position of aircraft carrier CO is clear to me. The requirements and expectations for command in FDNF (Forward-Deployed Naval Forces) carry yet another significance because our mission is so important. Many of my civilian friends focus and comment on the busy flight operations or being responsible for such an expensive ship, but it's just a part of it. What I really enjoy is the opportunity to work with so many motivated people that share a unique sense of purpose. You can't pull a team together and accomplish what's done in the Navy on board our aircraft carriers without some pretty special folks, especially in FDNF. Today's Navy recruits and accepts the brightest people in the country. Above even that, the vetting process to get to FDNF is thorough and rigid. We have the best of the best onboard USS Ronald Reagan.

*Capt. Donnelly is the 7th commanding officer of USS Ronald Reagan*

**MC2:** *What are you looking forward to most about being stationed in Japan?*

**CO:** The challenge of the operations and being right in the midst of one of the most significant regions for U.S. and international interests regarding population, sociological diversity, economy, commerce and natural resources. It makes our mission in FDNF not only essential but very dynamic. We have challenges and opportunities that are unique, even within our Navy's aircraft carrier fleet.

I look forward to working through these challenges to accomplish the mission. At a personal level, I look forward to my family arriving in Japan and getting to experience the friendship and culture of Japan.

**MC2:** *How do you prepare for an upcoming deployment?*

**CO:** First, we're always on deployment in FDNF. If you're part of FDNF, you're deployed—whether ashore on liberty or leave, in maintenance or at sea. As far as patrol specifically, there is certainly a lot of preparation as commanding officer that I do related to the schedule of operations and expected areas where we will operate. I'm keenly focused on the unique aspects of how we'll need to operate the ship, who we might need to interact with, how we are training and preparing in our mission areas and to fight

the ship and trying to anticipate where we might have decision points or difficulties in the future. This will allow us to find the best opportunities in the situations we come across during patrol.

Second, I also make certain that I have all my personal matters in order: what I need to do with my car; what I'm doing with my cell phone; what bills I need to have paid; how I'm going to stay in touch with my family and what things need to be taken care of, like IDs or car registrations, in case I cannot get in touch with them for an extended period of time. That lets me focus on the difficult work during patrol without worrying too much about what is back on the beach. In reality, my wife handles all that stuff better than me, anyway. She's awesome. It gives me peace of mind to know that we are coordinated and have everything taken care of to the maximum extent before I go on patrol.

**MC2:** *What motivates you?*

**CO:** The crew. I love having visitors on the ship at sea. They come on board with great anticipation to see the aircraft and giant machinery and systems of the ship and are very quickly overcome by the fact that there are 5,100 men and women working together in utterly amazing evolutions. The number one thing about that that motivates me are the comments from the visitors. They can't believe the average age of the crew is so young and they're always impressed with the incredible professionalism, motivation, teamwork and pride in the work that the crew is doing. Visitors leave with the realization that the ship is more than just the hull and airplanes, it is the Sailors. That is a huge source of pride and motivation to me.

*The average age of U.S. Navy Sailors is 20-years-old.*

**MC2:** *How do you define success?*

**CO:** Success starts with a plan. I consider something successful if we executed and achieved the original objective within the expectations of the plan. A plan is very unlikely to succeed if it doesn't have an objective, understanding of resources, fundamental procedures and ORM (Operational risk management). You can apply this to warfare at the extreme or just going on liberty, it is the same construct.

**MC2:** *What do you do in your free time? Hobbies?*

**CO:** I enjoy mountain biking, sailing and really anything on the water. I've been very fortunate to be stationed in some places that have offered the best opportunities for these activities and I think that Japan will be similar. I also love spending time watching my daughters' sports events. My girls enjoy and are pretty excellent soccer players and my middle daughters also play field hockey.

**MC2:** *Favorite sports teams?*

**CO:** Favorite team, simple: I'm a big Villanova University fan. They have excellent track, cross country, and lacrosse. My next favorite team is Villanova basketball. I love the philosophy and approach that Coach Jay Wright takes in building and

forming his teams. He develops leaders that are humble and understand how they fit in making the overall team successful. He develops a team that works unselfishly together to leverage everyone's unique capabilities and he develops players beyond being awesome basketball players as they go on to be outstanding citizens. And they crush it on the court.



**MC2:** *What is the most valuable advice someone has given you?*

**CO:** "Don't wait for someone to tell you what to do." I worked as a carpenter's helper growing up and my boss was a Vietnam veteran Marine. He taught me that when you think that you're done, think what else can be done. When you think you know something, think what about what you don't know. He motivated me to be curious about what I was responsible for and to never stop learning or figuring out ways to do it better. Beyond work, he taught to do what's right. Thinking like this, you find a lot more opportunities to use your own initiative and be responsible for your own success and it elevates your personal standards. You know the vision and the plan—drive towards it. Speak up early and figure out how to contribute if you don't know the plan.

**MC2:** *Why did you join the Navy?*

**CO:** I grew up on the eastern shore of Maryland and from a very young age was always around boats. I was allowed to take a boat out by myself as soon as I could start a motor at the age of seven years old.

Around that time I saw the Blue Angels for the first time and knew immediately that I wanted to fly. The Navy had the coolest flying so it followed from there.

**MC2:** *What is your greatest experience in the Navy?*

**CO:** First, being commissioned. Second, getting accepted to flight school. I've gotten to fly intercepts against the Soviet Union's fighter aircraft and bombers that I studied in flight school.

I did the F-14 air demo while I was a RAG instructor in late 90s. I met so many people in Canada, the Cayman Islands, the Virgin Islands and all over the U.S. People have a huge outpouring of support for the U.S. military, the Navy in particular. You really get an appreciation for what we do.

**MC2:** *What is your greatest strength?*

**CO:** I personally don't think I have a super strength. I'm lucky to have been surrounded with some great people. My wife and my family are very supportive. I've had the fortune of having great peers coming up as a junior officer and department head. I would say that my greatest strength is recognizing other people's strengths and leveraging them to get the mission done.

**MC2:** *What is your guilty pleasure?*

**CO:** Ice Cream. Ice cream crushes me. CS3 Isaac Patterson will tell you, I'll eat just about anything in front of me. Ice cream is my downfall.

# SETTING THE STANDARD

Story by MC3 Ryan McFarlane

With the completion of cycle one of the physical fitness assessment (PFA), USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) Sailors are keeping up with the new PFA standards.

Changes made were focused on the ideas of Vice Adm. Bill Moran, chief of naval personnel, who proposed a focus on year-round health and physical readiness goals, rather than two physical fitness tests a year.

Information found in NAVADMIN 061/16 includes a new system of body content analysis (BCA), new scoring system for the Physical Readiness Test (PRT) and automatic enrollment in the Fitness Evaluation Program (FEP) for Sailors who fail or score minimal passing numbers on their PRT.

Sailors aboard Ronald Reagan had varied opinions on the changes to the PFA standards.

"It seems like every time there's a PRT, there are new changes," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Fuel) 3rd Class Derrick Gordon, from Tampa, Florida. "I understand we have a bare minimum, but a pass is still a pass."

While not all were not in favor of the changes, some were.

"I don't think it's a bad idea," said Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Jacob Realzola, from Dallas. "I think it's good to raise the standards instead of lowering them. It will encourage people to perform at higher levels. We should always strive to improve ourselves."

Before Sailors prove their fitness through physical testing, they must pass a BCA test.

With the new standards they now have three different ways of being measured to assess their BCA. Only after failing the third test is when they fail their BCA and ultimately, their PFA.

Sailors' height and weight are measured like previous PFAs. The numbers are calculated to see if they fit within Navy BCA standards. If a Sailor's height and weight don't fit within the Navy's standards, they then move to the second step, the single site abdominal circumference measurement.

According to Chief Logistics Specialist Przemek Kryszinski, assistant command fitness leader, many people have the misconception that the single site abdominal circumference measurement is around the waist. The measurement is actually taken "above the right uppermost hipbone, at the side of the body vertically in line with the right armpit."

Sailors unable to pass the single site abdominal circumference measurement then go through traditional taping. Men are taped around their neck and abdomen and women around their abdomen and hips.

"If you don't pass the third step you're done," said Kryszinski. "You have officially failed the BCA."

Before the new instruction was released if a Sailor failed the BCA you wouldn't participate in the PRT. Now

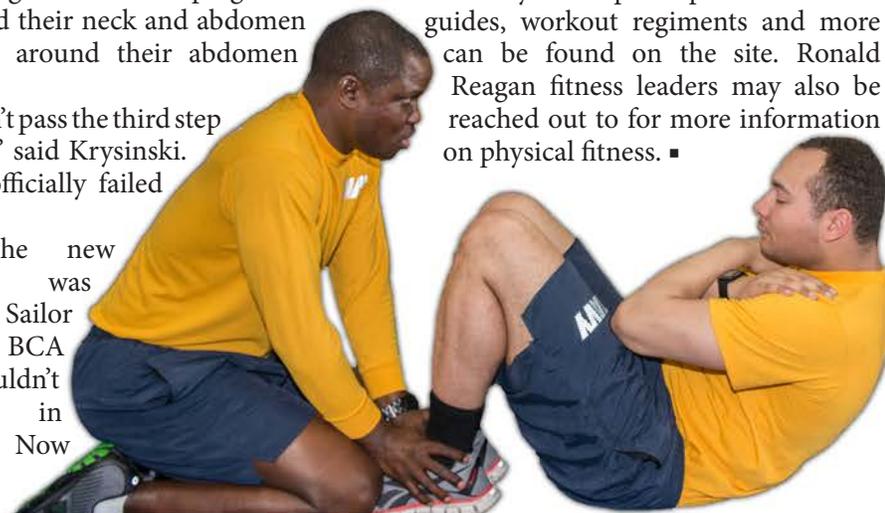
even after failing the BCA Sailors are still mandated to take the PRT.

"People may say 'you still want me to run' and the answer is 'yes,'" said Kryszinski. "The Navy still wants you to run because we still want to see your PRT score. These scores will be taken into consideration on things like boards and evals."

According to the Navy Physical Readiness Program, Members should participate in moderate activity 2 hours-and-a-half hours, and perform strength-training exercises at least twice per week to work all major muscle groups.

"The physical fitness of Sailors should not be an afterthought," said Kryszinski. "This new PRT system enforces year-round fitness and healthy life styles. It's up to all of us to make the change to a healthier lifestyle."

For more information on Navy fitness and standards, the Navy Personnel Command website can be accessed at [HTTP://WWW.Public.Navy.mil/bupers-npc](http://WWW.Public.Navy.mil/bupers-npc). Nutrition guides, workout regiments and more can be found on the site. Ronald Reagan fitness leaders may also be reached out to for more information on physical fitness. ■



# SAILOR SPOTLIGHT



## SAILOR SPOTLIGHT: getting to know

name: Tiffany Stiers  
 department: DECK  
 daily grind: DEPA, Maintenance, all day, everyday  
 hometown: Kansas City, MO  
 inspiration: My Dad  
 soundtrack (song): Free Bird by Lynyrd Skynyrd  
 that special place: The Ocean  
 sports team: KC Royals and KU Jayhawks  
 movie: Wedding Crashers  
 food: I love ALL FOOD!  
 can't live without: Family, Sunlight, adventures  
 proudest moment: when I realized I could travel anywhere by myself, and be perfectly OK with that  
 dream job: Anything that lets me travel & help people  
 best age, why?: 8, I had short hair and no responsibilities  
 hobby: Making crafts/gifts, going on adventures  
 mentor: AD 1 Mezei  
 the perfect day: Exploring some where new with someone I love.

# INSURV NOTE

## Some Plain Talk about Engineering

By INSURV Damage Control Inspectors

Khaki involvement is critical! Uniformed officers need to be involved in zone inspections to ensure discrepancies found are documented, placed into the workload, and quality assurance is properly applied. They need to be involved with the Planned Maintenance System (PMS) and spot check programs. The PMS ships are using to check material condition of their equipment needs to be technically correct, executable, with all uncompleted discrepancies documented for future action. If the PMS cannot be done step-by-step in accordance with the Maintenance Requirement Card (MRC), then a PMS feedback report shall be submitted.



Sunday      Monday

1	2
8	9
Mother's Day	C5RA Phase 2
15	16
22	23
29	30
	Memorial Day

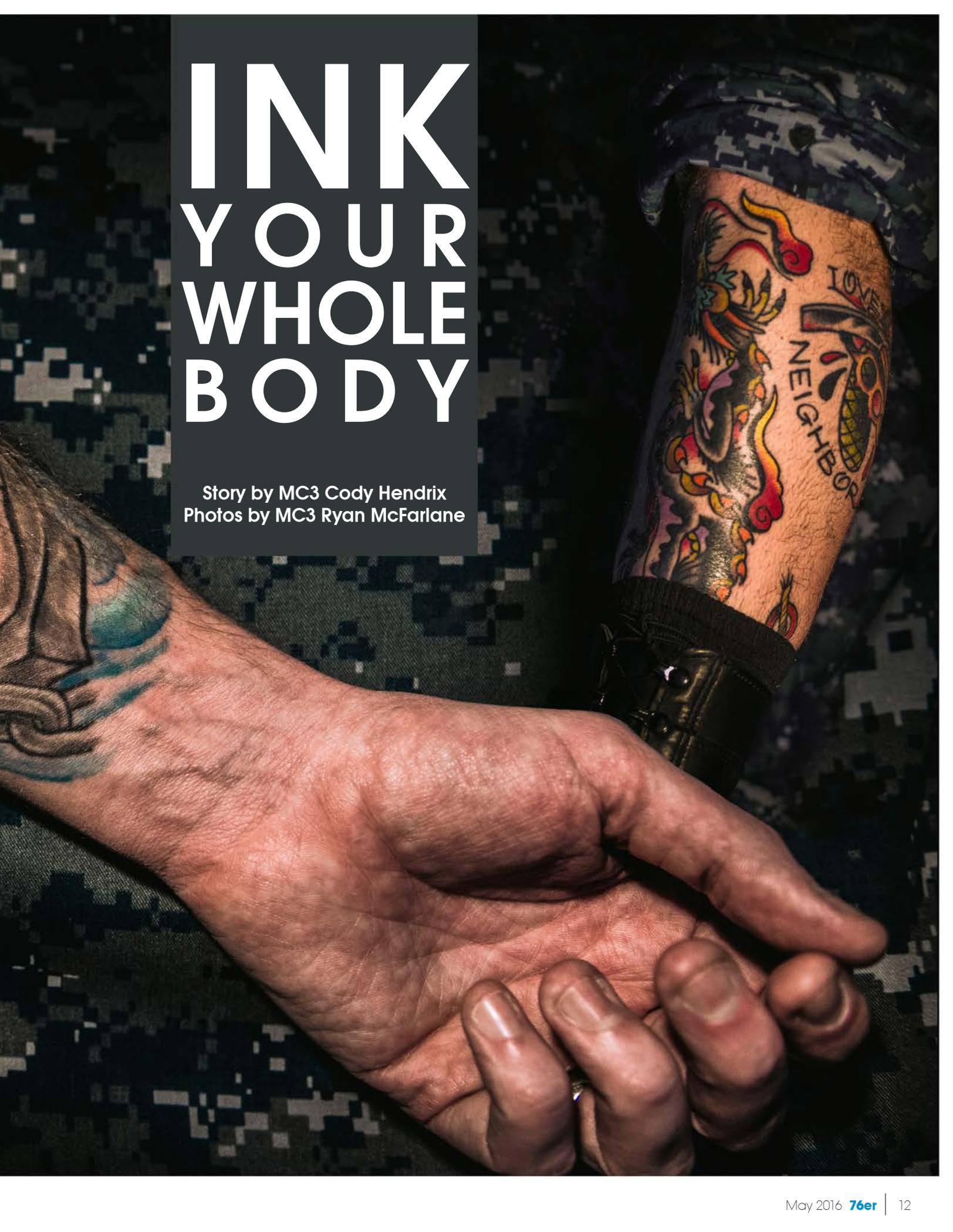
# KEY EVENTS FOR MAY 2016

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3	4	5 Cinco de Mayo	6	7
10 C5RA Phase 2	11 C5RA Phase 2	12	13 Friday the 13th	14
17	18	19	20	21 Armed Forces Day
24 National Brother Day	25	26	27	28 National Burger Day
31	1	2	3	4



# INK YOUR WHOLE BODY

Story by MC3 Cody Hendrix  
Photos by MC3 Ryan McFarlane





A Sailor has just returned to Yokosuka from patrol with USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) and walks off base with one thing on his mind – “It’s time to get some ink.” He has traveled more than 5,000 miles across the ocean and has earned the right to wear a swallow on his body, commemorating this achievement.

His journey to Tokyo takes him to a tattoo parlor he heard about through word of mouth while underway. He walks up the vibrant staircase and sees words and art painted across the walls. “Bright, Bold, Traditional.” As he walks through the door, he’s greeted by that noise that is all too familiar with this inked up Sailor. The whir of the tattoo gun is invigorating and the anticipation is building.

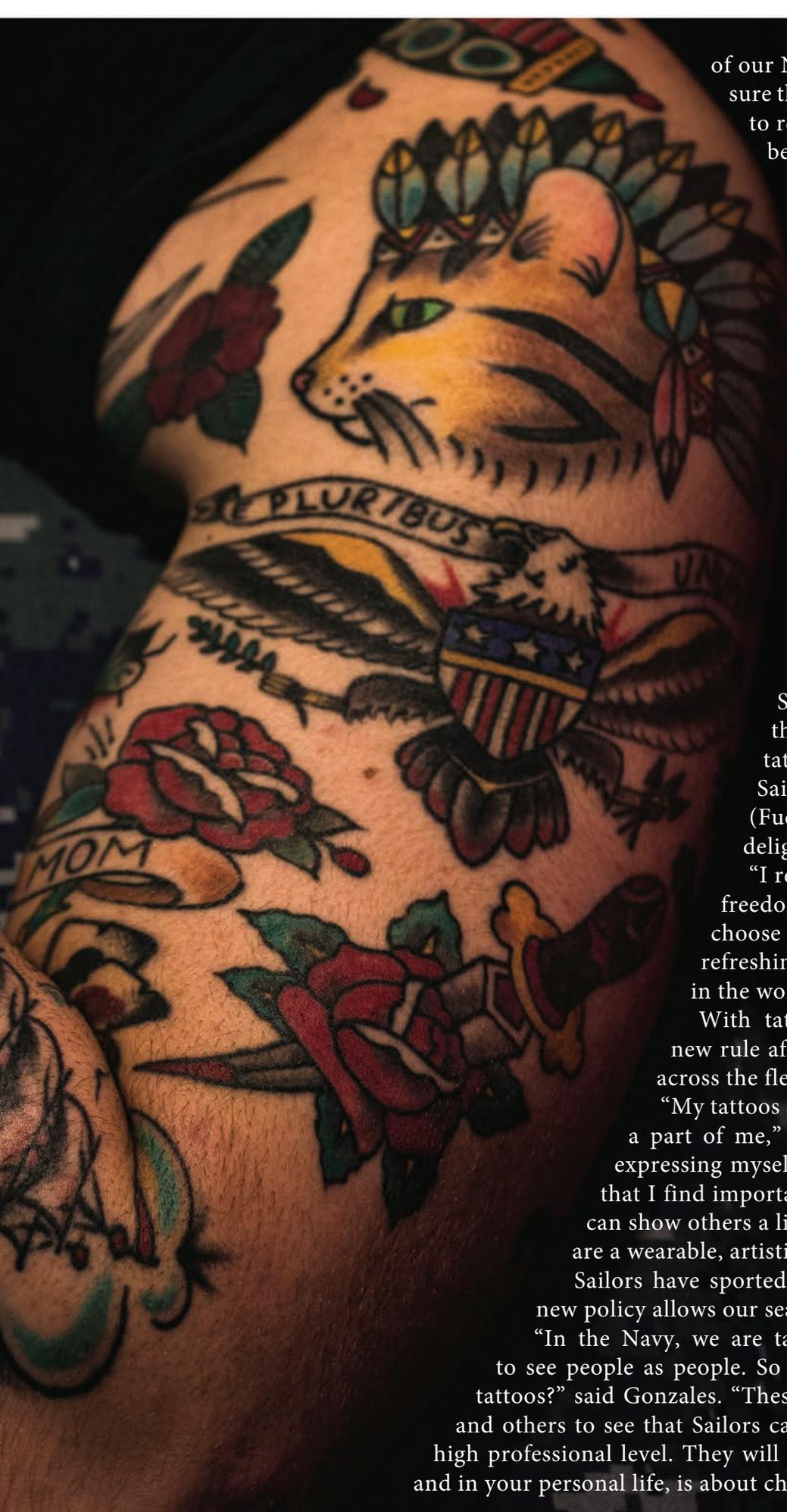
A sign hanging in this tattoo parlor reads, “The only difference between a tattooed person and a person who isn’t tattooed is that a tattooed person doesn’t care if you’re tattooed or not,” further affirming his confidence in his decision.

Tattoos have been a staple of Sailor culture for as long as most old salts can remember. As Sailors traveled across the seas, they earned markings that represented various nautical achievements. For example, a dragon might represent a port call in China, a swallow signified 5,000 nautical miles traveled, and a Sailor whose body was decorated with the image of a turtle meant he had crossed the equator.

According to the Pew Research Center, more than 35 percent of American adults between 18 and 25 years old have at least one tattoo. From a Fox News Poll, 35 percent of military service members have at least one tattoo.

On March 30, 2016, Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (AW/NAC) Mike Stevens announced the Navy’s tattoo policy would be revised, allowing Sailors to have tattoos on their necks, hands and forearms with fewer restrictions than before.

“We just got to the point where we realized that we needed to be honest with ourselves and put something in place that was going to reflect the realities of our country and the needs



of our Navy,” said Stevens. “We need to make sure that we’re not missing any opportunities to recruit and retain the best and brightest because of our policies.”

These new rules took effect April 30, allowing Sailors to:

- Have multiple or large tattoos below the elbow or knee, including the wrists and hands. This allows sleeve tattoos that can be seen even while wearing short-sleeve uniforms.

- Have one tattoo on the neck, which includes behind the ear. This tattoo may not exceed one inch in length or height in either or both directions.

- Sailors with visible tattoos are now eligible for recruiting duty or leading recruits at boot camp in Great Lakes, Illinois.

On board USS Ronald Reagan, some Sailors walk around the ship with their forearms completely covered with tattoos. When this policy was announced, Sailors like Aviation Boatswain’s Mate (Fuel) 3rd Class Joel Gonzales were delighted.

“I really enjoy the new regulations and the freedom it gives Sailors to get tattooed if they choose to,” said Gonzales. “I also believe it’s a refreshing and progressive outlook on tattoos in the workplace.”

With tattoos on his forearms and legs, this new rule affects Gonzales and many other Sailors across the fleet.

“My tattoos are important to me and are very much a part of me,” said Gonzales. “They are my way of expressing myself on things I believe in and the things that I find important. They also help me feel unique and can show others a little bit into the person that I am. They are a wearable, artistic expression of self.”

Sailors have sported body art for centuries now, and this new policy allows our sea warriors to continue that tradition.

“In the Navy, we are taught to be tolerant of everyone and to see people as people. So why can’t this pertain to people with tattoos?” said Gonzales. “These new regulations will allow the Navy and others to see that Sailors can perform many different jobs and at high professional level. They will show that how you act professionally, and in your personal life, is about character, not how you look.” ■



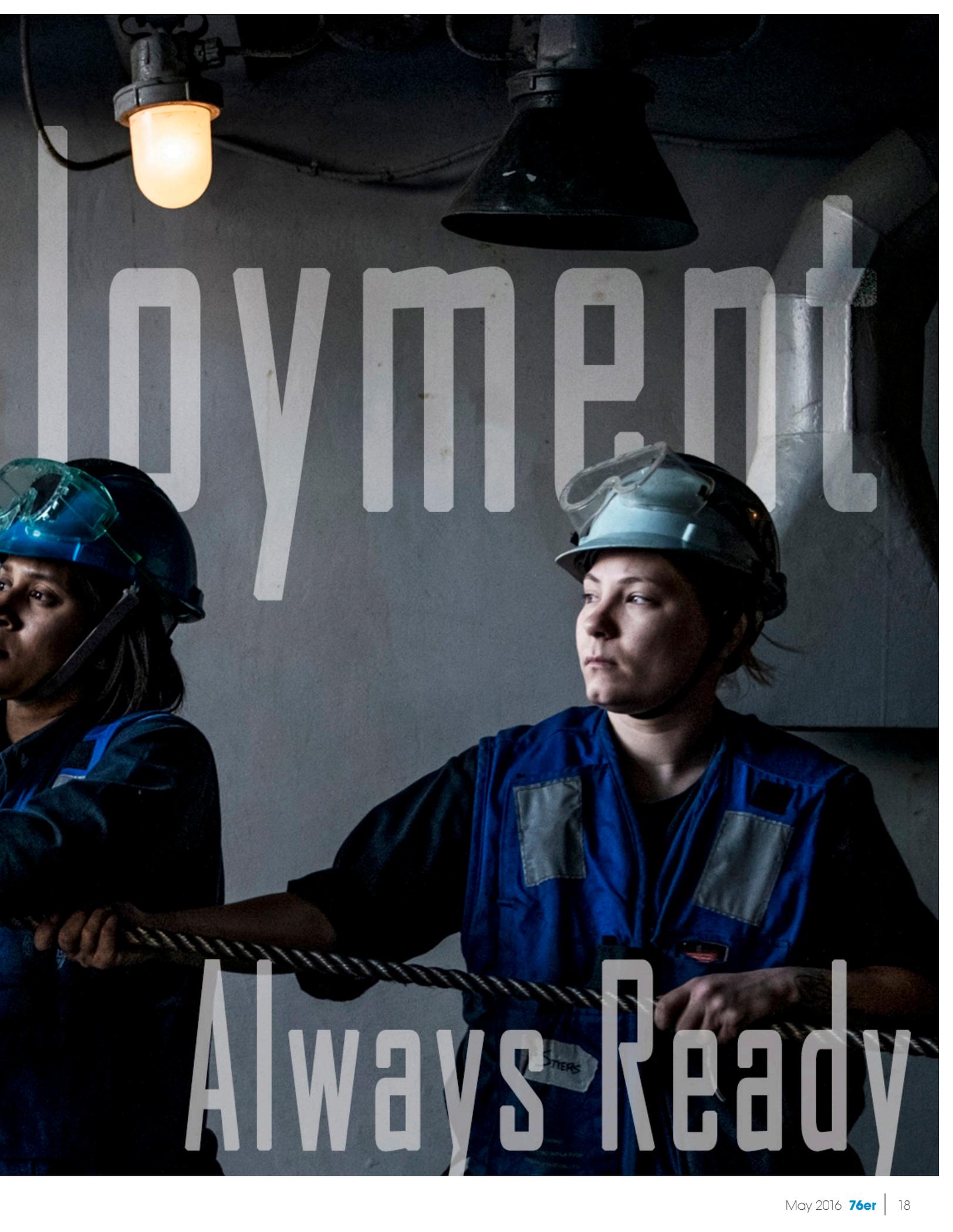


Through the Lens



# Pre-Deep





# Deployment

Always Ready

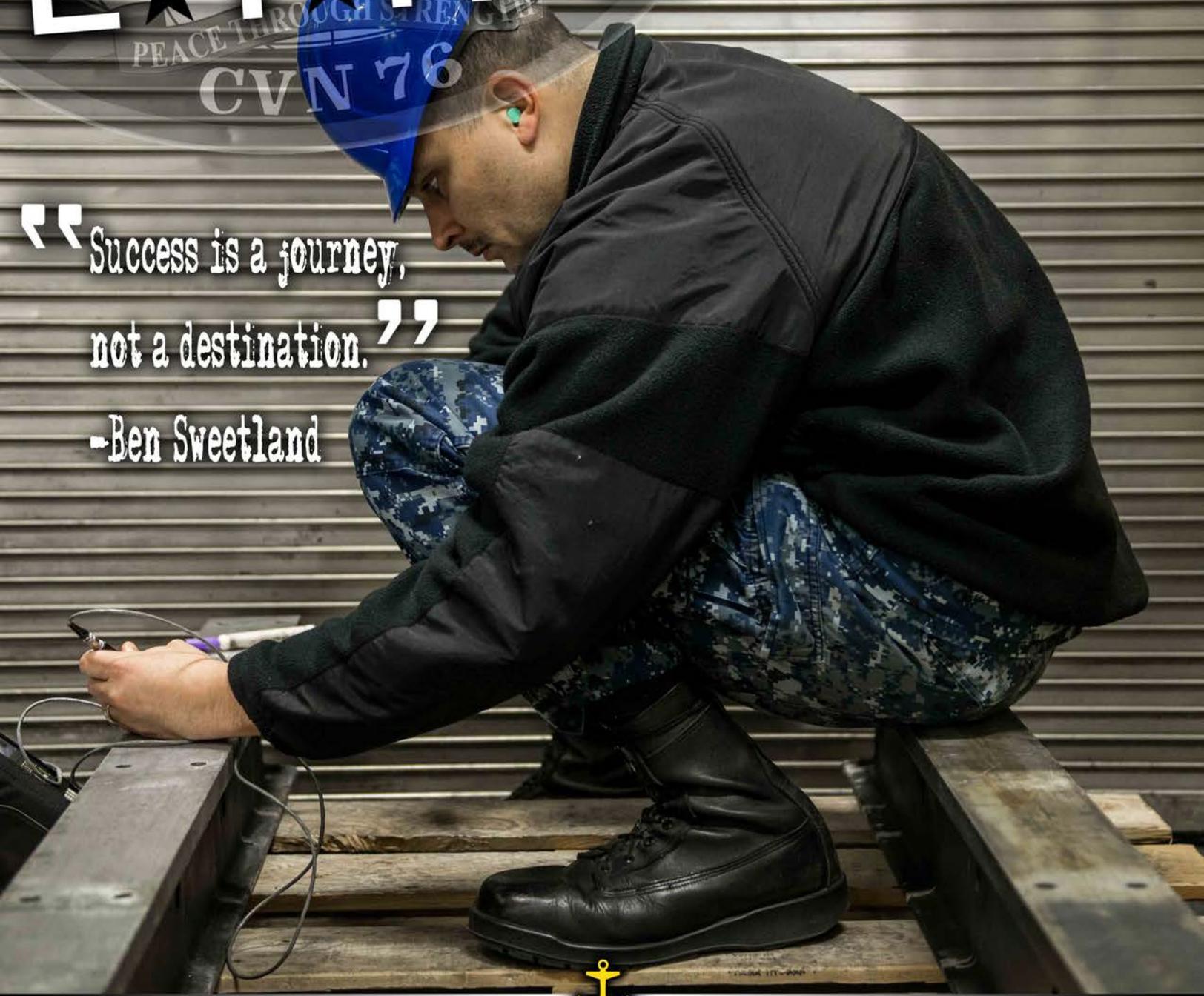
# WARRIOR ETHOS



PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH  
CVN 76

“Success is a journey,  
not a destination.”

-Ben Sweetland



USS RONALD REAGAN

SAILORS HELPING SAILORS. ONE TEAM. ONE FIGHT.